



Chapel remodeling project begins

Leonard Valdez, an employee of F&R Painting, Albuquerque, paints at the Chapel which is being remodeled. Until the project is complete, services will be held in the following locations: the Air Force Safety Center and Air Force Inspection Agency auditorium: Saturday Mass, 5 p.m.; Sunday Mass, 9 a.m. and Sunday Protestant traditional service, 10:30 a.m. The Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center Leaf Auditorium is the location for the Sunday Protestant contemporary service at 10:30 a.m.

Photo by Todd Berenger

Freedom for all, a nation we call our own

BY HARISH SHARMA

Department of Energy

For centuries, Asians and Pacific Islanders have been in this country. Some of them are already in their tenth generation.

In spite of the hardships they have faced, they have persisted and triumphed. To recognize that dedication and hardwork, President Jimmy Carter signed a joint resolution declaring May 4-10, 1979, as the first Asian Pacific American Heritage week.

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush expanded the celebration to the entire month. Public Law 102-450, approved on Oct. 23, 1992, designated May of each year as National Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

The month of May was chosen be-

cause it commemorated the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States on May 7, 1843. Also the trans-continental railroad was completed on May 10, 1869 (Golden Spike Day). A majority of the workers on that railroad construction were of Chinese descent.

Soon after that, migration on a large scale of Chinese immigrants took place. They came here to fulfill their dreams of striking rich by getting a slice of the "Gold Mountain" of California. For historical purposes, the first Asians to come to the shores of the United States occurred around 1750 in what would later become the state of Louisiana.

"Asian American and Pacific Islander" encompasses many ethnic groups with diverse backgrounds, histories, languages and cultures. As of

July 1999, four percent of the U.S. population was Asian Pacific Americans but they are the fastest growing racial/ethnic population in the United States.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders come from nearly fifty countries and ethnic groups, each with distinct cultures, traditions and histories. The term "Asian American and Pacific Islander" attempts to give expression to cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity, while recognizing common historical experiences in American history. Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebrates the collective accomplishments of these communities.

Asian Pacific Americans are helping to shape America's future. As entrepreneurs, artists, educators, public servants, scientists and explorers, they

challenge the minds of the next generation, expand commerce and innovation, probe the frontiers of space and search for cures for the world's diseases.

Some of those dedicated individuals include inventor An Wang, experimental physicist Chien-Shiung Wu, Challenger astronaut Ellison Onizuka, Columbia astronaut Kalpana Chawla and sculptor Isamu Noguchi.

During the month of May, let us remember the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans. For centuries, they have been enriching the culture and heritage of this great country. Irrespective of the national or ethnic background of the individual, there is freedom for all and for centuries, Asian Pacific Americans have been proud to call it their own.

VA announces changes for N.M. health care

Opening a new community clinic in Albuquerque, enhancing access to inpatient and outpatient care through renovation, reopening of closed clinics and contracting for care and using enhanced use leasing at the Albuquerque VA medical center are part of a plan to modernize VA health care.

The announcement includes the following enhancements for health care affecting veterans in New Mexico:

- ★ Open a new community outpatient clinic in Albuquerque;
- ★ Enhance access to inpatient and outpatient care through renovation,
- ★ Pursue enhanced use lease opportunities at the Albuquerque VA medical center.

About 38,000 of New Mexico's 187,000 veterans were treated last year in VA's health care facilities. In 2003, VA spent \$630 million in New Mexico, up from \$443 million three years before.

"These changes will provide greater access to care for veterans," said Secretary of VA Anthony J. Principi. "By strengthening our network of outpatient clinics, we will bring a greater quality of care closer to where most of New Mexico's veterans live."

The changes are part of a comprehensive plan called CARES, short for "Capital Asset Realignment for En-

hanced Services." The secretary's CARES report can be viewed in its entirety on VA's Web site at www.va.gov/CARES.

CARES is a plan to modernize and improve VA's health care system. Among the elements of the CARES are more than 150 new community based outpatient clinics, potential creation of four new - and expansion of five existing - spinal cord injury centers, two new blind rehabilitation centers and expansions throughout VA's healthcare system that will enhance veterans' access to VA care.

In July 1999, a General Accounting Office study found that VA was spending a million dollars a day on unneeded or unused facilities. The average age of VA's more than 4,900 buildings is more than 50 years, and the need to reduce vacant space and unneeded buildings has been the focus of several reports by the General Accounting Office.

This approach to facility's management means the dollars once wasted on old and vacant buildings can be used to enhance services in the communities where health care is provided.

"CARES modernizes VA's 74-year-old health care system," said Principi. "I want to emphasize that no veteran will lose health care as a result of CARES, nor will there be any gaps in their health care services."



Photo by Lisa Gonzales

International Chefs share expertise

Chef Claus Hjortkjaer, owner of Le Café Miche in Albuquerque, visited Kirtland AFB's Thunderbird Dining Facility, sharing his expertise with dining facility staff member Peter Kelly (left) and Elizabeth Lujan. Mr. Hjortkjaer, selected as Chef of the Year by the New Mexico Restaurant Association and a member of *Chaine de Rotisseurs* international gastronomic society, joins other international chefs who have prepared a select menu for a private function tonight at the Mountain View Club. Chef Hjortkjaer was joined by Jennifer James, chef and owner of "Restaurant Jennifer James" and "Graze by Jennifer James."

DMOC adds state-of-the-art B-1 simulator

BY WILLIAM ELLIOTT

705th Exercise Control Squadron

The U.S. Air Force Distributed Mission Operations Center, 705th Exercise Control Squadron brings the goal of live, virtual and constructive combat research and training to realization in a unique \$250 million modeling and simulation center for U.S. and coalition warfighters.

DMOC has added a B-1 weapon system trainer to its already full-house battlespace. The size of the weapon system trainer necessitated the construction of independent accommodations as a stand-alone facility.

In the future, and as research enables, the weapon system trainer will interface with the existing battlespace

within a distributed environment of weapon system live, virtual, and constructive simulators; the weapon system trainer's participation in Virtual Flag exercises is envisioned as an engineering challenge, but an obtainable long-term goal.

The weapon system trainer will operate in an independent simulator training capacity. The trainer is scheduled to begin training operations in August.

DMOC is an Air Combat Command organization under the Air Warfare Center and the 505th Command and Control Wing. DMOC provides battlespace integration of geographically separated live, virtual and constructive assets as real world weapon systems/ranges, human-in-the-loop and computer-driven simulations.

DMOC's wargaming infrastructure includes representations of over two hundred computers, twenty local area networks and fifteen wide area networks.

These are combined to support an immersive combat synthetic battlespace. The battlespace models nineteen different weapons and command, control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems in eighty-four medium-to-large scale live, virtual and constructive simulators.

Virtual Flags are joint distributed mission operations exercises that train hundreds of Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine warfighters quarterly.

Virtual Flags may be coupled with Red or Blue Flag exercises or in support of joint events. Virtual Flags al-

low crews to fully interact with live, virtual and constructive; command, control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; and shooter platforms in an integrated wartime environment.

The primary Virtual Flags focal areas concentrate on:

- ★ Training for enhanced combat readiness,
- ★ Establishing and maintaining battlespace situational awareness,
- ★ Assessment of battlespace/theater conditions and events,
- ★ Locating, identifying, tracking and monitoring targets and
- ★ The assessment of the infosphere for warfighter actions: deny, deceive, disrupt, destroy and degrade enemy capabilities.